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ABSTRACT

An outline of the grammar of Kanasi, a non-Austronesian language in the Indo-Pacific family of the Daga branch and spoken in Papua New Guinea, includes analysis of noun phrases (numerals and descriptive modifiers, genitive constructions, and adpositions); verbs (affixes; tense, aspect, and moods; and causation); predicate nominals; existential, locational, and possessive sentences; verbal clauses (basic constituent orders, coding grammatical relations, negation, and questions); and relative clauses. It is concluded that Kanasi is consistent in most respects with expectations for the SOV word-order language type, and inconsistent only in its post-nominal positioning of the relative clause, which is rare in Kanasi discourse. (MSE)

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# KANASI: A Brief Grammar Sketch[1]

Ronald W. Pappenhagen

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## 1 Introduction

Kanasi is a non-Austronesian language in the Indo-Pacific family of the Daga branch. It is spoken by approximately 2,000 people living in the Owen Stanley mountains in the Rabaraba subdistrict of the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea. There is no previous linguistic literature related to Kanasi, though the Daga language has been described (Murane 1974) and work is presently being undertaken in Umanakaina, another language in the Daga branch (Evensen, forthcoming).

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The data on which this sketch is based were collected under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics during nineteen months of residence in the village of Danobu between July 1982 and April 1985.

## 2 Noun phrases

### 2.1 Numerals and descriptive modifiers

In Kanasi, [2] numerals and descriptive modifiers follow their head nouns.

(1) Dágina éuda lo-tón.
skirt good take:off-3SG:PAST
He took off the good skirt.

(2) Né gagálo-na kámpaida wá-pa.
1SG talk-1SG:GEN short speak-1SG:FUT
I only have a little bit to say here.

(3) etá kérauda
garden:house small
small garden house

(4) bonó uára ia
pig many very
very many pigs

(5) tapároro natá ósi
week two only
only two weeks

(6) ónta áianapa dubá
pot sooty:deposit black
black sooty deposit (on the bottom of a) pot

Kanasi does not use definite or indefinite determiners, though non-specific persons or things can be identified by the post-nominal particle dá:

(7) nené dá
bird some/another
some bird

The demonstrative **emá** follows its head:

(8) Né letá emá girúma-nten.
1SG letter DEMON write-1SG:PAST
I wrote this letter.

Note that in (8) if the order of noun and demonstrative is reversed a predicate nominal sentence results:

(9) Dimá? Emá letá.
what? DEMON letter
What is this? This is a letter.

Relative clauses also follow their heads:

(10) HEAD RESTRICTING SENTENCE
Letá [é wáúbe-'an] né wadá-na.
letter 2 send-2SG:PAST 1SG get-1SG:PAST
I got the letter (that) you sent.

The relative clause in Kanasi will be dealt with more fully in Sect.6.

This placement of numerals, descriptive modifiers, determiners, demonstratives and relative clauses after their head nouns is inconsistent with the canonical OV word order type (Sect. 5.1.2; Comrie 1981:89).

**2.2 Genitive constructions**

In Kanasi the possessor exclusively precedes the possessed item.

(11) Taíí ebó-wa wanála
vine name-3SG:GEN vine:species
(The) vine's name is (i.e., is called) wanala

(12) Róni nuá-wa kadí-den.
Ron heart-3SG:GEN bad-3SG:PAST
Ron's heart was bad. (lit: Ron was upset.)

This placement of the genitive (possessor) in relation to the possessed item is consistent with general expectations for an OV language (Comrie 1981:89).

**2.3 Adpositions**

Kanasi is exclusively postpositional in that the semantic role of an oblique NP is specified by free standing

postpositions. The postpositions, however, are inflected by suffixation for the person and number of their arguments:

(13) iá osó-ve
tree on-3SG
in the tree (lit: on the tree)

(14) Tané bonó wá-wa osó-ve lapí-len.
later pig leg-3SG on-3SG trap-3SG:PAST
Later the pig's leg got caught in the trap.

(15) Dú bedé-ve wán-de.
house inside-3SG E:be/sit:AN-3SG:PRES
He is (sitting) in the house.

(16) ená dá bedé-ve
year another inside-3SG
next year

(17) Nó máin-imbo ví-sen.
1PL to-1PL come-3SG:PAST
He came to us.

This postpositional characteristic is consistent with the canonical OV word order type as discussed in Comrie (1981:89).

## 3 Verbs

### 3.1 Affixes

Kanasi employs suffixing on the verb to accomplish agreement with subject and object and also to signal the tense, aspect and mood. There are some marginal examples of prefixation used to code direct objects, but these are restricted to only one verb that we are aware of. Certainly, prefixing is not a salient feature of the language. The following are some straightforward examples of how Kanasi uses suffixing on the verb stem.

(18) Esá debáma nóse-n.
water big come:down-3SG:PAST
A lot of water came down. (i.e., had much pressure)

(19) Taii topúna téine-pi.
vine vine:species pull-3SG:FUT
He will pull the topuna vine.

(20) Né ná-'e-pa.
1SG eat-2:OBJ-1SG:FUT
I will eat you.

The only clear example of prefixing occurs with the verb 'give.' Here the prefixes always refer to recipients while the suffixes always refer to the agent, i.e., the giver.

(21) Káire emá e-né'e-pa.
sweet:potato DEMON 2SG-give-1SG:FUT
I will give this sweet potato to you.

(22) Káire emá wa-ná-pa.
sweet:potato DEMON 3SG-give-1SG:FUT
I will give this sweet potato to him.

In (21) and (22) the prefixes agree with the recipient object of the verb. The verb for 'give' is the only verb we have encountered to date that operates in this manner.

In addition to suffixation and the marginal case of prefixation outlined above, at least one Kanasi verb is suppletive depending on the number of the direct object. The verb meaning 'take' occurs in the form **wadé** if the patient is singular (ex. 23, 24) and in the form **otá** if the patient is plural (ex. 25):

(23) Manisi-wa wadé-n.
tobacco-3SG:GEN take:SG:item-3SG:PAST
He took his own tobacco.

(24) Vé wadé-'e-n.
sickness take:SG:item-2-3SG:PAST
You got sick. (lit: The sickness took you.)

(25) 'E natá otá-mo-n.
spear two take:PL:items-3PL:OBJ-3SG:PAST
He took two spears.

Most transitive verbs in Kanasi show no agreement with third person singular direct objects. Alternatively, one might say that the normal third person singular direct object marker is zero, as illustrated in (26) and (27):

(26) Iá tó-n.
tree chop-3SG:PAST
He chopped the tree (down).

(27) O ná-dina.
banana eat-1SG:PRES
I am eating the banana.

For some transitive verbs, however, third person singular direct objects are indicated with the suffix **-sa**:

(28) Bonó bó-sa-n.
pig die-3SG:OBJ-3SG:PAST
He killed the pig.

In sum, Kanasi uses only suffixes on the verb except in the case of 'give' which employs a prefix for the recipient object. This is consistent with the expectations for an OV language (Comrie 1981:90).

### 3.2 Tense, aspect and mood

The following is a preliminary analysis of the tense-aspect-mood system of Kanasi. A thorough-going study of the use of tense, aspect and mood in discourse will be necessary before any firm conclusions can be drawn concerning this complicated topic.

Kanasi grammaticalizes tense, aspect and mood through suffixes attached to the verb. The following are straightforward examples of past, present and future tenses. These examples are devoid of markers for aspect, mood, etc., as signified by the -0.

(29) Angelina imána náúkai wadé-n-0.
Angelina yesterday bowl take:one:item-3SG:PAST
Angelina took the bowl yesterday.

(30) Angelina náúkai táúma wadé-de-0.
Angelina bowl now take:one:item-3SG:PRES
Angelina is holding the bowl.

(31) Deáma á-lepi isíma wadé-pi-0
later go-3SG:FUT knife take:one:item-3SG:FUT
Later he will get the knife and bring it here.

vím-pi-0.
come-3SG:FUT

Aspect in Kanasi may be illustrated by the following common utterances that are used in leave-taking. When a person is about to go they say 'I am going.' Then the hearer usually responds with one of the following statements:

(32) Né wáine-dina.
1SG E:be/sit:AN-1SG:PRES1
I am sitting. (i.e., I will stay while you go.)

(33) Né wáine-pina.
1SG E:be/sit-1SG:PRES2
I am sitting.

Both examples are ostensibly present tense. But one would say (32) if one were standing as the other person were getting ready to leave and the speaker were **about to sit down**. On the other hand one would say (33) if one were **already** sitting down and would be planning to **continue to do so** while the other person left. So a better translation for (33) might be: 'I will continue to sit (here).'

### 3.3 Causation

Kanasi employs only lexical causatives rather than morphological or analytical causatives. Therefore the idea of causation is actually tied up in the verb itself without the addition of extra affixes or words.

(34)(Plane trip text.)
Nó asim-ba potá-len mái gagálo etá-pona.
1PL ear-1PL:GEN close:up-3SG:PAST NEG talk hear-NEG
Our ears were plugged (and) we could not hear.

Pléni asim-ba potá-sa-n.
plane ear-3PL:GEN close:up-3SG:OBJ-3SG:PAST
The plane plugged up our ears.

(35) Ambi dewá-len? Rón dewá-sa-n.
what do-3SG:PAST Ron do-3SG:OBJ-3SG:PAST
What happened? Ron did it.

The suffix -sa in (34) and (35) is merely a 3SG object marker and not a causative morpheme, as the following examples will show:

(36) Duádi-sa-pa.
bathe-3SG:OBJ-1SG:FUT
I will bathe him.

(37) Duádi-'e-pa.
bathe-2:OBJ-1SG:FUT
I will bathe you.

(38) *Duádi-sa-'e-pa.

While we conclude that Kanasi has lexical causatives, we acknowledge that other strategies could still be at work and that much more study needs to be done in this area.

## 4 Predicate nominals

Kanasi forms predicate nominal sentences by juxtaposing two noun phrases:

(39) Sá bodubódu waláma.
DEMON wet:season day
That is the wet season.

(40) Iá emá sabóma.
tree DEMON tree:species
This is a saboma tree.

(41) Aúpa mám-ba Omoasi.
Aupa father-3SG:GEN Omoasi
Aupa's father is Omoasi.

(42) Rábawai baráú apána.
Rabawai sorcery man
Rabawai is a sorcerer.

(43) Apána sá baráú apána.
man DEMON sorcery man
That man (just referred to) is a sorcerer.

## 5 Existential, locational and possessive sentences

### 5.1 Existential verbs

In Kanasi the existential, locational and possessive sentences are formed by combining a noun phrase and a locative phrase (in either order) followed by a verb. We call this verb an 'existential verb.' Existential verbs are not technically copulas, since they do not occur in

predicate nominal constructions. The choice of existential verb in any construction is determined by the class of the noun phrase of which it predicates existence. The following is a list of existential verbs and the noun classes to which they belong.

| Verb Stem | Gloss | Noun Phrase Class |
|---|---|---|
| wán- | E:sit | animate |
| viné- | E:be | inanimate |
| ené- | E:stand | animate and inanimate and tall |
| seú- | E:hang | inanimate and hanging |

## 5.2 Existential sentences

In Kanasi the existential sentence is formed with an indefinite noun phrase normally followed by a locative phrase and then the existential verb:

NP (LOC) E:VERB
[indef]

(44) Mápo nené dá ebó-wa bináma
long:ago bird another name-3SG:GEN bird:hornbill
Once upon a time there was a hornbill bird

só-wa kóko natá wám-oi-ena.
friend-3SG:GEN bird:cassowary CONJ E:sit:AN-3PL-PAST
and his friend a cassowary bird.

(45) Boní emá wáim-oi bá día?
ghost here E:sit:AN-3PL:PRES or NEG
Are there ghosts here or not?

Boní uára wáim-oi!
ghost many E:sit:AN-3PL:PRES
There are many ghosts!

(46) Boní uára irá'i-na bedé-ve wáim-oi.
ghost many garden-1SG:GEN in-3SG E:sit:AN-3PL:PRES
There are many ghosts in my garden.

(47) Sopí viné-de.
soap E:be:INAN-3SG:PRES
There is soap.

(48) Wáita seú-moi.
bush:mango E:hang-3PL:PRES
There are bush mangoes.

### 5.3 Locative sentences

The locative sentence is formed with a definite or an indefinite noun phrase followed by a locative phrase and then the existential verb:

NP (LOC) E:VERB
[def/indef]

(49) Eló emá ká ató-ve wán-de.
dog DEMON table under-3SG E:sit:AN-3SG:PRES
This dog is under the table.

(50) Buká sá waká osó-ve viné-de.
book DEMON table on-3SG E:be:INAN-3SG:PRES
The book is on the table.

(51) Ama-na dú-na bedé-ve viné-de.
hammer-1SG:GEN house-1SG:GEN in-3SG E:be:INAN-3SG:PRES
My hammer is inside my house.

### 5.4 Possessive sentences

In Kanasi the most common possessive sentence type is parallel to the existential sentences described above, except that the nominal whose existence is predicated is possessed:

(52) Mé obá'am-pa uára wáim-oi.
3SG children-3SG:GEN many E:sit:AN-3PL:PRES
He has many children.

(53) Né dú-na ené-de.
1SG house-1SG:GEN E:stand-3SG:PRES
I have a house.

Example (52) could be paraphrased 'His many children exist', and (53) might be paraphrased 'My house exists'. There are also some less common ways to frame possessive sentences, as illustrated in (54) through (56):

(54) Nó máin-imbo iá dia.
1PL to-1PL wood NEG
We do not have wood.

(55) Iá dia mám-pe.
wood NEG to-3SG
He does not have any wood.

(56) Ama inta ná? Mamasia mám-pe
hammer way where Mamasia to-3SG
Where is the hammer? Mamasia has it.

(vine-de).
(E:be:INAN-3SG:PRES)

These forms do not employ an existential verb. As with many languages (Clark 1978), these possessive sentences are formally parallel to locational sentences, as described in section 4.3., with the possessor coded as a locative NP (**mámpe** 'to him', **mámpu** 'to them,' etc.). Perhaps it is significant that in all the contexts for (54), (55) and (56) the 'owner' is not really owning but only has something temporarily.

The last example of a possessive sentence shows yet another form:

(57) Mé mám-ba dia, (mái wám-pona, dia).
3SG father-3SG:GEN NEG (NEG E:sit:AN-NEG NEG)
He has no father, (He does not exist/is not alive.).

This example illustrates that in the negative, the existential verb
may be omitted.

## 6 Verbal clauses

### 6.1 Basic constituent orders

**6.1.1 Intransitive clauses.** The basic constituent order in intransitive clauses is SV:

(58) Róni né natá á-nten.
Ron 1SG CONJ go-1:PAST
Ron and I went.

(59) Sikóko púnde-n?
water:spout break-3SG:PAST
Did the water spout break?

(60) Bónim-o víne-na tadín-o ítú-nten.
Bonima-LOC come-1SG:PAST night-LOC sleep-1:PAST
I arrived in Bonima at night and slept (there).

**6.1.2 Transitive clauses.** The basic constituent order in transitive clauses is SOV:

(61) Stíven áia badówa wá-de.
Stephen language strong speak-3SG:PRES
Stephen is speaking well.

(62) Né letá emá girúma-nten.
1SG letter DEMON write-1SG:PAST
I wrote this letter.

(63) Boní omán áúbe-n uá-wa epé-n.
ghost rock throw-3SG:PAST head-3SG:GEN hit-3SG:PAST
The ghost threw a rock (and) hit her in the head.

Kanasi can be characterized as a very rigid SOV language, since variant orders only occur under pragmatically very marked conditions, such as false starts and restatements. I will not argue further here for SOV as the basic constituent order in Kanasi clauses.

**6.1.3 Indirect objects and obliques.** Indirect objects and other obliques appear in any position relative to the verb:

(64) Riá-sa-'a né máin-awo vím-pi.
slide-3SG:OBJ-2SG:IMP 1SG to-1SG come-3SG:FUT
Slide it towards me.

(65) Ináko mám-pe á-íta.
mommy to-3SG go-2SG:IMP
Go to (your) mommy.

(66) Róni né natá á-nten sú esá mám-pe.
Ron 1SG CONJ go-1:PAST up water to-3SG
Ron and I went up to the water (tap).

(67) Esá mám-pe víne-n Róni dewá-sa-n.
water to-3SG come-1:PAST Ron do-3SG:OBJ-3SG:PAST
When we came to the water (tap), Ron did it.

**6.1.4 Quotation clauses.** With respect to quotations, the quoted information follows the verb 'say' so that one could state that with these sentences the pattern is not SOV but rather SVO:

(68) Tané bináma wá-n-ase
CONJ bird:hornbill say-3SG:PAST-QUOTE
Then the hornbill bird said:

Máí é báúta duádi-ta'a.
NEG 2 first bathe-2:SG:IMP
'No, you bathe first.'

## 6.2 Coding grammatical relations

Kanasi uses a variety of means to distinguish the semantico-syntactic roles of **S** (the single argument of an intransitive clause), **A** (the most agentive argument of a transitive clause) and **P** (the most patient-like argument of a transitive clause).

**6.2.1 Word order.** The main method Kanasi employs to distinguish the grammatical relations is word order. In the transitive clause the role order is always A-P-Verb:

(69) Alan á-len.
Alan go-3SG:PAST
Alan left.

(70) Alan Báti epé-n.
Alan Bati hit-3SG:PAST
Alan hit Bati.

(71) Alan káire ná-n.
Alan sweet:potato eat-3SG:PAST
Alan ate the sweet potato.

(72) *Káire Alan ná-n.

**6.2.2 Verb agreement.** The roles A and P may be distinguished through morphological verb agreement. The verbal constituent order is:

STEM-OBJECT:MARKER-SUBJECT:MARKER

(73) Bonó adé-'e-pi!
pig bite-2:OBJ-3SG:FUT
The pig will bite you!

(74) Alan posí epá-mo-de.
Alan ball hit-3PL:OBJ-3SG:PRES
Alan is kicking the balls.

(75) Sedá ewá-mo-na.
young:people see-3PL:OBJ-1SG:PAST
I saw the young people.

**6.2.3 Pronominal system.** The roles S and A can be coded with pronouns and with full noun phrases whereas P cannot. The P can only be coded as a full noun phrase or as a verbal suffix in a pragmatically unmarked clause. It is also important to note that the pronouns can only be used with human S's and A's. If the construction has a non-human S or A then a noun phrase will be used in place of the pronoun.

**SUBJECT PRONOUNS AND OBJECT VERB AGREEMENT MARKERS IN KANASI**

| | S & A Subject Pronouns | | P Object Verb Agreement | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Singular | Plural | Singular | Plural |
| 1st person | né | nó | -na | -no |
| 2nd person | é | é | -'e | unknown |
| 3rd person | mé | mó | 0,-sa | -mo- |

(76) Mé adá-na-en.
3SG:HUM bite-1SG:OBJ-3SG:PAST
He bit me.

(77) Nó ináwa'a máí keró wadá-no-pona.
1PL:HUM healthy NEG sickness get-3PL:OBJ-NEG
We are not sick. (lit: The sickness has not got us.)

(78) Né ná-'e-pa.
1SG:HUM eat-2:OBJ-1SG:FUT
I will eat you.

(79) Otó-pa duádi-sa-de.
child-3SG:GEN bathe-3SG:OBJ-3SG:PRES
She is bathing her child.

(80) Náúkai mité-de.
bowl wash-3SG:PRES
She is washing the bowl.

(81) Náúkai mitá-mo-de.
bowl wash-3PL:OBJ-1SG:FUT
She is washing the bowls.

Example (79) illustrates the use of the -sa as the 3SG object marker. But in (80) there is nothing to mark the 3SG object. This presents an unresolved problem about determining which verbs will have an object marker for 3SG and which will not.

The following chart displays the verbs that use -sa and those that do not use it. We have divided the Kanasi verbs into two classes based on the 3SG past tense endings.

| Class II that never take -sa- | Class II that do take -sa- | Class II with -sa- included have Class I endings | All Class I never take -sa- |
|---|---|---|---|
| á-len<br>'he left' | lagá-len<br>'he lied' | lagá-sa-n<br>'deceived him' | evé-n<br>'he saw it' |
| nú-len<br>'he cooked it' | potá-len<br>'it closed up' | potá-sa-n<br>'closed it up' | wadé-n<br>'he took it' |
| itú-len<br>'he slept' | dewá-len<br>'it happened' | dewá-sa-n<br>'he did it' | wané-n<br>'he gave it' |
| rovó-len<br>'he jumped' | duádi-len<br>'he bathed' | duádi-sa-n<br>'bathed him' | dié-n<br>'asked him' |
| iní-len<br>'it grew' | kadí-den<br>'it broke' | kadí-sa-n<br>'he broke it' | é-n<br>'he left it' |
| nó-sen<br>'it fell' | bó-len<br>'he died' | bó-sa-n<br>'he killed it' | wá-n<br>'he said it' |
| ví-sen<br>'he came' | día-len<br>'it ended' | día-sa-n<br>'finished it' | ná-n<br>'he ate it' |
| | dabúa-len<br>'he is bored' | dabúa-sa-n<br>'he bored him' | ínse-n<br>'perceived it' |
| | riá-len<br>'it slid' | riá-sa-n<br>'he slid it' | rovíne-n<br>'he turned it' |
| | form unknown | sáú-sa-n<br>'helped him' | téine-n<br>'he pulled it' |
| | form unknown | wadákea-sa-n<br>'clawed him' | áí-n<br>'put it inside' |
| | | | 'ené-n<br>'speared it' |
| | | | tó-n<br>'he cut it' |
| | | | itú-n<br>'put it down' |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | ié-n<br>'he came down' |
| | | odé-n<br>'he came up' |
| | | ené-n<br>'he stood up' |
| | | wái-n<br>'he sat' |

The pattern that emerges is that Class I verbs are transitive and Class II verbs are intransitive. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that the addition of **-sa** (3SG object marker) to most Class II (intransitive) verbs makes those verbs have Class I (transitive) endings.

### 6.3 Negation

The negation strategy for Kanasi is a negative particle and/or suffix. There is no one way to form negatives in Kanasi, but the most common method is the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| mái + VERB-pona | = | negative in past tense |
| mái + VERB | = | negative in future tense |
| form unknown | = | negative in present tense |

When the **-pona** suffix is employed, the verb, depending on its class, can be affected. A Class I verb (i.e., with 3SG:PAST suffix **-n**) will lose its person marker when the suffix **-pona** is attached. A Class II verb (i.e., with 3SG:PAST suffixes **-len** or **-sen**) will retain the person marking. For these Class II verbs the tense, of course, is retained since the **-pona** automatically means 'past tense.'

It is also worth noting that when the person marker is dropped with the Class I verbs, it is **not** transferred to the negative element. It is just that the marking is gone altogether so that the forms all look alike.

The following are examples of these common negatives illustrating the two verb classes:

| | **Class I Verb** | **Class II Verb** |
|---|---|---|
| PAST TENSE | | |
| (82) | **Né wá-na.**<br>1SG say-1SG:past<br>I said it. | (83) **Né itú-nte-n.**<br>1SG sleep-1SG-PAST<br>I slept. |
| (84) | **Né máí wá-pona.**<br>1SG NEG way-NEG<br>I did not say it. | (85) **Né máí itú-nta-pona.**<br>1SG NEG sleep-1SG-NEG<br>I did not sleep. |
| FUTURE | | |
| (86) | **Né wá-pa.**<br>1SG say-1SG:FUT<br>I will say it. | (87) **Né itú-ntea-pa.**<br>1SG sleep-1SG-FUT<br>I will sleep. |
| (88) | **Né máí wá-pa.**<br>1SG NEG say-1SG:FUT<br>I will not say it. | (89) **Né máí itú-ntea-pa.**<br>1SG NEG sleep-1SG-FUT<br>I will not sleep. |
| PRESENT | | |
| | forms unknown | |

The negative particle **máí** is used alone (i.e., without **-pona**) in the predicate nominal construction.

(90) **Né baráú apána.**
1SG sorcery man
I am a sorcerer.

(91) **Né máí baráú apána.**
1SG NEG sorcery man
I am not a sorcerer.

The suffix **-pona** is also employed for the irrealis mode, especially in contrary-to-fact constructions:

(92) Aúpa óme-n.
Aupa fall:AN-3SG:PAST
Aupa fell.

(93) Aúpa **máí** óme-pona.
Aupa NEG fall:AN-NEG
Aupa did not fall.

(94) Aúpa óme-pona.
Aupa fall:AN-COND
Aupa almost fell (but did not).

Another method for forming negatives is the particle **si'a**. At present we do not see any difference between the meanings for the **si'a** and the **máí + -pona** forms.

| **Class I** | **Class II** |
|---|---|
| (95) **Wá si'a.**<br>say NEG<br>It was not said.<br>(Nobody said it.) | (96) **Itú si'a.**<br>sleep NEG<br>Nobody slept. |
| (97) **E wá si'a.**<br>2 say NEG<br>You did not say it. | (98) **E duádi si'a.**<br>2 bathe NEG<br>You have not bathed. |

Another method of forming the negative, which may be related to the **si'a** particle, is the suffix **-si**:

| **Class I** | **Class II** |
|---|---|
| (99) **Né wá-si-a-nten.**<br>1SG say-NEG-go-1:PAST<br>I did not say it. | (100) **Né itú-si-a-nten.**<br>1SG sleep-NEG-go-1:PAST<br>I did not sleep. |

This is not a form that we have often encountered and for the most part has come to our attention only through direct elicitation. Future research will reveal the extent to which **-si** is a productive negative strategy, and whether any nuances of meaning are associated with it that are not revealed in the elicited translations.

We have examined the negative particles and suffixes **mái, -pona** and **-si, si'a**. Now we shall turn our attention to the negative particle **día**. This particle appears most commonly in questions and in answers to questions. When it is used to answer a question, it occurs in conjunction with the constructions discussed above:

(101) E ái-ten bá día? Día, mái á-nte-pona.
2 go-2SG:PAST or NEG NEG, NEG go-1SG-NEG
Did you go or not? No, I did not go.

(102) Mé á-len bá día? Mái á-le-pona, día.
3SG go- SG:PAST or NEG NEG go-3SG-NEG, NEG
Did he go or not? He did not go.

Example (102) illustrates that día can come at the end of the answer as well as at the beginning as in (101) with no apparent effect on the meaning.

The word **día** also appears as a prominent part of some negative possessive sentences.

(103) Nó **máin-imbo** iá día.
1PL to-2PL wood NEG
We do not have any wood.

(104) Iá día mám-pe.
wood NEG to-3SG
He does not have any wood.

(105) Mé mám-ba día.
3SG father-3SG:GEN NEG
He has no father.

In sum, the unmarked negation strategy in Kanasi is the particle **mái**, often occurring in conjunction with negative suffixation of one sort or another. Also the finite verb can lose the person marker when the **-pona** negative suffix is attached, and this is conditioned by the class of the verb in question. But the lost person marker does not attach itself to the negative particle. Since Kanasi predominantly employs a negative particle strategy for negation, it is consistent with the expectation for an SOV language.

**6.4 Questions**

**6.4.1 Yes/No questions.** There is no obvious intonational difference between yes/no questions and unmarked declarative sentences:

(106) Sikóko púnde-n?
water:spout break-3SG:PAST
Did the water spout break?

Further study may reveal some subtle intonational characteristic of yes/no questions (e.g. rising intonation elsewhere other than sentence-finally).

The major yes/no question strategy involves the use of a sentence-final tag particle:

(107) E ái-ten bá (dia)?
2 go-2SG:PAST or (NEG)
Did you go or not?

(108) Ná-'(a) ó?
eat-2SG:IMP QTAG
Do you want to eat it?

Like declarative sentences, this yes/no question structure has sentence-final falling intonation. The tag particle **ó** identifies this sentence as a question.

The use of a sentence final question particle is consistent with the OV language type as described by Greenberg (1966:10).

**6.4.2 Information questions.** In information questions the question word occurs wherever the corresponding non-question word would occur in a corresponding declarative sentence.

Examples of sentence-initial question words:

(109) Dimá wadé-n?
What? take:one:item-3SG:PAST
What did he take?

(110) Midá rába itú-n?
Who? rubber:pipe put:one:item-3SG:PAST
Who put the pipe (in the water)?

(111) Ná á-len?
Where? go-3SG:PAST
Where did he go?

(112) Ambi dewá-len?
How? do-3SG:PAST
How did it happen?/What happened?

Examples of sentence medial question words:

(113) Tané nó dimá wadá-te'e odá-ntata?
CONJ 1PL what? get-1PL:ASP feast-1PL:FUT
But what will we be able to get for the feast?

(114) E obán-'a ámbi wáim-oi?
2 children-2SG:GEN how:many? E:sit:AN-3PL:PRES
How many children do you have?

(115) E ná ái-ti'ana?
2 where? go-2SG:PRES
Where are you going?

(116) Waláma dáinea' é ái-ti'ana?
day which? 2 go-2SG:PRES
Which day are you going? (i.e., when...?)

The following are examples of question words in sentence final position. It is interesting to note that the question word appears sentence finally only in sentences which have no verb overtly present.

(117) Ama inta ná?
hammer road where?
Where is the hammer?

(118) Mé ebó-wa ámbi?
3SG:HUM name-3SG:GEN how?
What is his/her name?
(lit.: How is his name?)

(119) Mé ebó-wa midá?
3SG:HUM name-3SG:GEN who?
What is his name?
(lit.: Who is his name?)

(120) Emá dimá?
DEMON what?
What is this here?

(121) Omó dimá?
sun what
What time is it?

(122) Nitú dáinea'?
thing which?
What is (that) thing?

(123) E apá(na) dáinea'?
2 man which?
Who are you?

The data show that the information question words in Kanasi can appear sentence initial or elsewhere, as would be expected in an OV language (Greenberg 1966:111).

## 6.5 Comparison

Kanasi has no grammaticalized way of forming comparatives. The following example illustrates how comparison is accomplished paraphrastically:

(124) Emá debáma emá kérauda.
DEMON big DEMON small
This is big (and) this is small.

Since Kanasi does not have a comparison strategy employing a standard of comparison, a marker and an adjective of comparison, nothing can be said about how it meets the expectations for an OV language with respect to these elements (Comrie 1981:92).

## 7 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are not very common in Kanasi. The following are the only two examples of relative clauses we have encountered in the corpus used for this sketch. In the following examples, the head is underlined and the relative clause is bracketed:

(125) **Letá** [é wáúbei-'ana] né wadá-na.
letter 2 send-2SG:PAST 1SG get-1SG:PAST
I got the letter (that) you sent.

(126) Rón Dién Stíven **otó** **kérauda** [ebó-wa
Ron Jane Stephen child small name-3SG:GEN
Ron, Jane, Stephen and the little baby, whose

ámbi ne móa-na] dó udú'udu níapo.
how 1SG not:know-1SG also all greeting
name I do not know, greetings to all of you.

In both of these examples the restricting clause follows the head. The strategy in (125) is the gap type in that the relativized element has been omitted from the restricting clause and there is no relative pronoun. The head and restricting clause are merely juxtaposed. It also should be noted that in (125) the object is being relativized.

The example in (126) is a bit unusual in that it contains no matrix verb. Still, it can be seen that the restricting clause follows the head as in (125). Example (126) relativizes the possessive and instead of using the gap strategy (126) uses the pronoun retention strategy. As in (125), there is no relative pronoun but the word **ámbi** has been included. Strictly speaking **ámbi** is an interrogative word.

A second hypothesis for example (126) is that it may not even be a relative clause. Rather it may be only a parenthetical expression, an aside, so to speak. If this be so, the ámbi may indeed be an interrogative and so the speaker was in effect asking what the child's name was.

## 8 Conclusion

This sketch has shown that in most respects Kanasi is consistent with the expectations for the SOV language type, as outlined in Greenberg (1966). Kanasi is inconsistent with the SOV norm only in its post-nominal positioning of the relative clause. However, relative clauses are quite rare in Kanasi discourse, and further research may reveal patterns other than those observed to date.

**Notes**

1. The basic work on this paper was completed to satisfy in part the course requirements for Linguistics 505 (Typology and Discourse) taken during the summer session 1985 of the Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. I would like to express appreciation to my colleagues Dr. Tom Payne, Dr. David Tuggy, Mr. Steve Knapp and Mr. Rick Nivens, all of S.I.L., for their guidance in producing this brief grammar sketch. Appreciation is also extended to the many Kanasi friends who patiently recorded and helped transcribe and gloss Kanasi text material essential to this analysis.

2. Abbreviations and orthographic conventions used throughout this sketch are the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| * | = | grammatically unacceptable form |
| : | = | separates two English words glossing one Kanasi form |
| ( ) | = | inclusion optional |
| 1SG | = | first person singular |
| 1PL | = | first person plural |
| 2 | = | second person singular or plural |
| 2SG | = | second person singular |
| 2PL | = | second person plural |
| 3SG | = | third person singular |
| 3PL | = | third person plural |
| A | = | item highest in agentivity in a transitive clause |
| AN | = | animate |
| ASP | = | aspect |
| COND | = | conditional |
| CONJ | = | conjunction |
| def | = | definite |
| DEMON | = | demonstrative |
| E | = | existential verb |
| FUT | = | future tense |
| GEN | = | genitive |
| HUM | = | human |
| IMP | = | imperative |
| INAN | = | inanimate |
| indef | = | indefinite |
| lit. | = | literally |
| LOC | = | locative |
| NP | = | noun phrase |
| NPrel | = | relativized noun phrase |
| OBJ | = | object |
| OBL | = | oblique object |
| P | = | item most patient-like in a transitive clause |
| PAST | = | past tense |

PL = plural
PRES = present tense
QTAG = question tag particle
S = single argument in an intransitive clause
SG = singular

The symbols used to represent Kanasi forms in this paper generally follow the IPA conventions, with the following exceptions:

l = voiced alveolar lateral continuant.

r = flap r [ɾ]

' = glottal stop

á = stress

Dashes are used in Kanasi forms cited within the text to indicate whether each form is a prefix, suffix or root. For example **e-** indicates a prefix, **-sa** indicates a suffix, and **wadé** (no dashes) indicates a root. This convention obscures the fact that verb roots and many suffixes never occur without some suffix following them. So, for example, **wadé** would never occur as a free form in natural discourse, and a well-formed word would never end with the suffix **-sa**. Nevertheless, in keeping with common practice, we have opted for this convention, as any alternative seems even more opaque.

Most of the examples appearing in this paper are drawn from an extensive body of texts collected by myself and my wife, Jane Pappenhagen, although common expressions are used when needed to illustrate completely straightforward forms.

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